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EASINGTON RURAL DISTRICT

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REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

For the Year ending December 31, 1897

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WINGATE,

February, 1898.

Gentlemen,

I beg to submit to you my Report of Sanitary Work and Vital Statistics for the year ending 31st December, 1897.

During the year, 694 deaths occurred and 1470 births were registered.

The death rate was 18.23 per thousand of population, against 20.26, the average for the previous seventeen years.

The birth rate was 38.61 per thousand of population, against 40.63, the average for the previous seventeen years.

The death rate is 47.47 per cent. of the birth rate, against 50.28, the average for the previous seventeen years.

The number of deaths under five years of age was 359, being 51.72 per cent. of the total deaths, against 52.74, the average for the previous seventeen years.

The number of deaths under one year to one thousand births was 170, against 165, the average for the previous sixteen years.

28 deaths were of persons over 80 years of age: 17 males with an average of 81.7 years, and 11 females with an average of 83.3 years.

176 deaths occurred in the first quarter, 182 in the second, 188 in the third and 148 in the fourth.

47 Coroners' Inquests were held—a marked decrease.

Of the 48 deaths at Easington, one was at the Hospital for Infectious Diseases, and 32 at the



Workhouse; two young infants; two middle-aged persons from heart affections; and the rest from diseases incident to old age.

The deaths from the principal zymotic diseases were 1.20 per thousand of population, against 2.34, the average for the previous sixteen years. They were :—

		Under 5	Over 5	Total
Measles ...	...	21	—	21
Whooping Cough	...	3	—	3
Scarlatina	...	5	1	6
Diphtheria	...	2	—	2
Membranous Croup	...	2	—	2
Enteric Fever	...	1	6	7
Continued Fever	...	2	3	5
		—	—	—
		36	10	46

SMALLPOX.—No case has appeared during the year.

MEASLES.—For many years this disease has been periodically severe every second year. The end of 1896 saw an epidemic expiring in Wingate and Seaham, and in the first quarter there were a few lingering cases in both these districts. In June, it was introduced from Sunderland to Murton, the

only populous centre that escaped in 1896. There it took strong hold, and became quite epidemic, to the extent of 300 cases. In October, it reappeared at Seaham, lasting for over two months, to the extent of 400 cases. There the infants' department of a public school was closed, by order of the Council, for three weeks. Excepting these two places, it has not been distinctly epidemic in any other part of the district. The case mortality was, on the whole, light, about 2.5 per cent., and the whole district is now free from it.

WHOOPING COUGH.—There has been no epidemic of this during the year. In the third quarter there were a few cases at Shotton, causing two deaths, and only a very few scattered cases, of a mild type, throughout the rest of the district.

SCARLET FEVER.—The end of 1896 brought a severe epidemic of this, chiefly in Haswell, Monk Hesleden, Wingate and Seaham. In the first quarter this continued at Seaham, and extended to Murton. During the second and third quarter its incidence was very slight, while in the fourth it rose considerably. Haswell, Murton and Seaham were the most affected centres. Curiously, at Thornley, like the previous year, there was not a single case. As before, its incidence was greatest in cold weather, and least in fine, in the proportion of four to one.



The case mortality in the different localities varied from 0 to 10 per cent. and averaged 4.7 for the entire district. This disease is so infectious for a long period during convalescence, that its propagation cannot be stopped without the co-operation of the community generally, which, in the existing state of public feeling and sanitary enlightenment, cannot be obtained. One case, a domestic servant, brought, ill, from outside the district, was taken to the Infectious Hospital.

DIPHTHERIA.—Five cases only were notified during the year. The first appeared at Kelloe, after coming from an infected house outside the district, and there were other two cases in the same house. The next case was at Hutton Henry. There was no history of infection and no indication, after a careful examination, of any insanitary condition that might lead to its production. The last case was at Shotton. Clinically, it showed every resemblance to the disease. The house was free from damp, and there were no surroundings to indicate its origin, but the case occurred in a poverty-stricken family, where there were several other children. I took the precaution to have a slough subjected to a bacteriological examination with the result that the diphtheria bacillus was found to be absent. It was therefore pronounced to be not diphtheria. For precautionary

measures the case was removed to the Isolation Hospital. I am therefore happy to be able to say that no case of this disease has originated from any insanitary condition in the district during the year.

MEMBRANOUS CROUP.—Only three cases of this have been notified during the year, two of which were fatal. They had no connection with each other.

TYPHUS FEVER.—No case has occurred during the year.

ENTERIC FEVER.—This is a disease that is continually with us; but it is by no means universal throughout the district, and its incidence has been less than any year on record. Per thousand of population, its incidence was 0.9, while for the previous four years it was 8.1, 2.9, 2.0 and 1.3, thus showing a declination most gratifying and satisfactory. The case mortality was 20.5 per cent., which, though greater than in previous years, indicates more accuracy in diagnosis. There were three cases in the first quarter, five in the second, eleven in the third and fifteen in the fourth. This is the usual experience, that this disease is found to exist most commonly in the latter part of the year. It also coincided with the deaths from diarrhœa, with which this disease is closely associated. The first case of the year was

at Wingate, in a woman who came directly from an infected house outside the district. The next there was in October, in a cleanly-kept house, with no close drainage system to it, and a good water supply; the next was at an outlying farm, with a suspicious water supply. In Hutton Henry, the first was in April, brought, ill, from outside the district. The next, in October, was not severe; the surroundings were clean, and showed no cause for its existence. One case in June, two in September, and one in December were clearly traceable to the use of dirty water from drains. At Thornley, the first case, in March, was surrounded by circumstances strongly suspicious of typhus. The next in May and three in September. Two in one house were associated with dirtily-kept backyards. At Haswell, one case in May was in a dirty, poverty-stricken house; the other, in September, afforded no clue whatever to its origin. At Murton, there was one case in each of the months March, May and July; one was contracted outside the district; the others, by their sanitary surroundings, afforded no trace of their origin whatever. The severest incidence during the year was at Seaham. The first in August, two in September, and the rest spread over the last quarter. There was no question of water supply, and no pains are spared in the efficient scavenging of this village. Still, there can be no doubt these cases have an ashpit and privy origin. They markedly predominated in



level streets and houses with enclosed yards and high walls ; sometimes the houses were dirtily kept, but oftener they were quite clean. The most favourable point in the year's cases is that, excepting Seaham, they are spread evenly over the district. Of the 34 cases, in three only were there two in one house. Three were distinctly introduced from outside the district, and in five there was justifiable reason for blaming the drinking water. Although this is clearly a record year for the light incidence of cases in the district, there are still some cases which, though their origin cannot be distinctly traced to any definite cause, are clearly the result of some sanitary defect. To combat these, there must be no abatement in our vigilance in the direction of sanitary improvements ; and the most important of these is not elaborate construction, but simple scavenging in all its careful details.

CONTINUED FEVER.—The number of cases is half that of the previous year. Though this reduction is very gratifying, the case mortality is larger, nearly 8 per cent. ; but in reality it is not so large, for on careful enquiry with the notifiers it was admitted that at least 25 per cent. of these fatal cases were really due to Meningitis. As in previous years there was no evidence of its infectiousness ; and to a large extent it was very much more associated with conditions of poverty (with which the district is at



present very much afflicted) than insanitation. On the whole, however, the diminished incidence is satisfactory.

DIARRHŒA.—This was not marked at any time during the year. The deaths were all of children under five years, and mostly in the third quarter. The deaths were 3.02 of the total deaths, against 4.25, the average for the previous fourteen years. In many cases it was associated with tuberculosis, but improper feeding, due to ignorance or poverty, plays a large part.

PUERPERAL FEVER.—The proportion of this to births, which in the four previous years was 0.59, 0.67, 0.34 and 0.30 per cent., this year was nil. This gratifying result is satisfactory evidence of improved sanitary surroundings throughout the whole district.

The death rate from phthisis was 1.07 per thousand of population, and from respiratory diseases 2.57, both much below the average of previous years.

Enlargement of Hospital for Infectious Diseases, which has been under the consideration of your Council for some years, is now an accomplished fact. A new hospital, containing 12 beds in two wards, has been erected, with every equipment, including a first-class ambulance wagon. A nurse-matron and

male and female caretakers have been permanently appointed. Besides this, the old hospital is still kept open, and in readiness to be used exclusively for cases of smallpox. During the year, only three cases have been admitted, one of scarlet fever, one enteric fever and one diphtheria.

Disinfectants are freely distributed, disinfection performed by your Inspectors, and infected articles burned when considered necessary, and compensation made.

SANITARY WORK EXECUTED.—Your Surveyor, besides the necessary work of repairs to maintain in order the existing sanitary works of the Council, has constructed 2850 yards of sewage pipes, as follows:—

Haswell.—150 yards of 15-inch pipes, to connect the main sewers with the settling tanks; 200 yards of 6-inch pipes as branch services for one street.

Thornley.—300 yards of 6-inch pipes, to receive the surface drainage from two streets by gratings and deliver into mains.

Trimdon Foundry.—200 yards of 9-inch pipes to drain, by sinks, backyards of houses in Rodwell Street; 150 yards of 12-inch pipes to drain Cuthbertson Street, taking the place of an old brick sewer.

Wheatley Hill.—400 yards of 12-inch pipes to convey sewage, which formerly entered the beck alongside of it, to the purifying tanks; 300 yards of 15-inch pipes to remove sewage from the higher part of the village to the settling tanks, and also save contaminating the beck.

Wingate.—250 yards of 6-inch pipes to drain four cottages at the top of Pickering Street and a public house.

South Hetton.—300 yards of 6-inch pipes to convey the contents of the surface channels on the west side of the village to the settling tanks; 200 yards of 9-inch pipes to further drain the same part of the village, in place of open channels; 200 yards of 12-inch pipes to receive the sewage from the eight rows; 250 yards of 15-inch pipes to collect all these and convey to the settling tanks. The private houses on these routes have formed connexions with these sewers by means of gully traps.

ASHPIT AND PRIVY ACCOMMODATION.—At Thornley, 10 houses have been provided with this, and 30 houses at Wheatley Hill Colliery and High Wheatley Hill.

NEW PROPERTY.—At Trimdon, 12 new houses have been built; Deaf Hill, 6 houses; Murton, 19

houses. These were all built from plans passed by your Council, and inspected by your Surveyor before being occupied; at Wingate, 12 houses have been re-roofed and repaired.

INSANITARY PROPERTY.—Proceedings for the closing of insanitary houses have been instituted for 32 at Murton, 84 at South Hetton, 24 at Trimdon Foundry; and the necessary improvements have been secured without the property being closed.

SCAVENGING AND REFUSE REMOVAL.—In all the populous parts of the district, except Murton and Seaham, this duty is now undertaken by your Council with marked benefit. New settling tanks have also been constructed at Wheatley Hill and Haswell.

WATER SUPPLY.—The scheme for the supply of Wingate Lane, High Wheatley Hill and Old Wingate, though approved by the Local Government Board, is not yet begun with. No scheme has yet been agreed upon for the supply of Monk Hesleden. Wheatley Hill Colliery has a supply of water, but the distribution is still very deficient. Station Town and South Wingate are, since the stoppage of the colliery in November, utterly without any supply. A scheme is being pushed on to supply these places from Wingate, and in the meantime water is conveyed there in carts.



Three samples of water have been analysed during the year, two of which were found to be pure and the other polluted.

BUTCHERS' SHOPS AND SLAUGHTER HOUSES.—The number of these has not been increased. They are still subject to careful inspection.

COWSHEDS AND DAIRIES.—The number of these has not been increased. There have been considerable improvements in many of them. In one case only was there a case of infectious disease in or about the building, when the cows were transferred to another locality.

COMMON LODGING HOUSES.—The existence of these is limited to the village of Easington. They are regularly inspected, and no case of infectious disease has been found in them during the year.

In addition to the periodical visits by myself, the sanitation of the district is the sole occupation of your two Inspectors. By them many statutory notices have been given, besides numerous verbal notices, as occasion required, for nuisances in the shape of defective or inefficiently cleaned ashpits and privies, dirty yards, obstructed sinks and drains, piggeries, &c.

I have much pleasure in pointing out that all the statistics for the year show clearly reductions in the

disease rates and death rates of a gratifying nature; so much so, indeed, that this may be pronounced a record year.

A very great deal of new work has been done throughout the district; and I have no hesitation in saying that the district at present is in such a healthy state that congratulation may be safely indulged in.

For the correction of Table A, there were 12 deaths of persons in the Workhouse, belonging to Dawdon, and one in the Fever Hospital from an adjoining district. About the same number died in the County Asylum, belonging to the district, which leaves the death rate unaltered.

The area of the district is 36,940 acres.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

**JAMES ARTHUR,**

L.R.C.P.E., L.R.C.S.E., D.P.H.R.C.P.E.,

Medical Officer of Health.

*To the Easington Rural District Council.*

(A)

TABLE OF DEATHS during the year 1897 in the EASINGTON RURAL DISTRICT, classified according to  
DISEASES, AGES and LOCALITIES

NAMES OF LOCALITIES adopted for the purpose of these Statistics; public institutions being shown as separate localities.	Mortality from all Causes, at subjoined ages								Mortality from subjoined Causes, distinguishing Deaths of Children under Five Years of Age																							
	At all ages	Under 1 year	1 and under 5	5 and under 15	15 and under 25	25 and under 65	65 and upwards		Smallpox	Scarlatina	Diphtheria	Membranous Group	Fevers							Cholera	Erysipelas	Measles	Whooping Cough	Diarrhoea and Dysentery	Rheumatic Fever	Phthisis	Bronchitis, Pneumonia and Pleurisy	Heart Disease	Influenza	Injuries	All other Diseases	TOTAL
													Typhus	Enteric or Typhoid	Continued	Relapsing	Puerperal															
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22		
Easington .....	48	5	3		2	12	26	Under 5 5 upwds.						1	1				1			2		2	1	5				6	8	
Haswell .....	83	28	14	4	2	16	19	Under 5 5 upwds.		3				1	1						2		2	7						26	42	
								5 upwds.							1								5	8				1		26	41	
Shotton .....	13	1	4		1	1	6	Under 5 5 upwds.													2				2					1	5	
Castle Eden, Hawthorn, Burdon, Cold Hesleden, Dalton-le-Dale .....	25	4	8	1		8	4	Under 5 5 upwds.												2		1			1					8	12	
								5 upwds.																1	2	3		1		6	13	
East Murton .....	120	47	25	6	5	25	12	Under 5 5 upwds.		1				2						6		1		1	13					50	72	
								5 upwds.		1														4	6	4		3		28	48	
Kelloe .....	27	4	2		1	17	3	Under 5 5 upwds.		1	1														1					3	6	
								5 upwds.																1	1	3		13		3	21	
Thornley .....	72	28	10	3	5	14	12	Under 5 5 upwds.						1												4				34	38	
								5 upwds.																	12			1	3	16	34	
Wingate .....	129	58	19	8	4	29	11	Under 5 5 upwds.				1								2	1	5		2	15					51	77	
								5 upwds.						1											9	5	3	4		23	52	
Monk Hesleden, Hutton Henry, Sheraton, Hulam, Nesbit .....	69	33	7	4	3	14	8	Under 5 5 upwds.			1									1		2			4					32	40	
								5 upwds.																4	4	5	1	1		14	29	
Seaham, Seaton, Slingley ..	108	43	16	4	8	25	12	Under 5 5 upwds.				1			1					10		8		3	6					30	59	
								5 upwds.						1	1									8	3	9				26	49	
TOTALS .....	694	251	108	30	31	161	113	Under 5 5 upwds.		5	2	2		1	2					21	3	21		8	53					241	359	
								5 upwds.		1				6	3				1				1	33	46	35	5	27	177	335		





(B)

TABLE OF POPULATION, BIRTHS, AND OF NEW CASES OF INFECTIOUS SICKNESS coming to the knowledge of the Medical Officer of Health, during the year 1897, in the EASINGTON RURAL DISTRICT, classified according to DISEASES, AGES and LOCALITIES

NAMES OF LOCALITIES adopted for the purpose of these Statistics; public institutions being shown as separate localities.	Population at all Ages		Registered Births	Aged under 5 or over 5	New Cases of Sickness in each Locality, coming to the knowledge of the Medical Officer of Health													Number of such Cases removed from their Homes in the several Localities for Treatment in Isolation Hospital																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																															
	Census, 1891	Estimated to middle of 1897			Smallpox	Scarlatina	Diphtheria	Membranous Croup	Fevers					Typhus	Cholera	Erysipelas					Smallpox	Scarlatina	Diphtheria	Membranous Croup	Fevers					Typhus	Cholera	Erysipelas																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
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Notification of Infectious Diseases Act has been in force since 4th April, 1893. The Easington Rural District Council's Infectious Hospitals are situated at Easington.





